

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of Claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A connector for use in a plasma arc apparatus comprising:

a housing defining a hollow internal channel, the hollow internal channel comprising a shoulder disposed between a first portion and a second portion of the hollow internal channel;

at least one locking finger disposed within the hollow internal channel and disposed distally from the shoulder, wherein the shoulder, the locking finger, and the housing form a one-piece construction ~~and the locking finger are integral with the housing;~~ and

a pin comprising:

a first collar with a shoulder disposed thereon; and

a second collar disposed proximally from the first collar,

wherein the locking finger engages the pin shoulder to prevent movement of the pin in a proximal direction and the housing shoulder engages the second collar of the pin to prevent movement of the pin in a distal direction without a member disposed between the locking finger and the housing, and the second collar of the pin blocks access to the locking finger through the first portion of the hollow internal channel; and

wherein the one-piece construction of the housing, the locking finger, and the shoulder prevent the pin from being removed without destruction of the connector.

2. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 1, wherein the pin further comprises a tapered portion such that the pin shoulder is disposed between the first collar and the tapered portion.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 1, wherein the housing comprises a fiber-reinforced nylon material.

5. (Original) The connector of Claim 1 further comprising eight locking fingers evenly spaced around the hollow internal channel.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 1, wherein the pin is recessed within the second portion of the hollow internal channel.

8. (Original) The connector of Claim 1, wherein the pin is a negative lead gas carrying pin of the plasma arc cutting apparatus.

9. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 1, wherein the pin comprises a brass material.

10. (Currently Amended) A connector for use in a plasma arc apparatus comprising:

a plug housing defining a hollow internal channel with a first portion and a second portion;

a plurality of locking fingers disposed within the hollow internal channel between the first portion and the second portion, the locking fingers being integral with the housing and the plug housing forming a one-piece construction; and

a negative lead gas carrying pin comprising a first collar with a shoulder disposed thereon, and a second collar disposed proximally from the first collar,

wherein the locking fingers engage the shoulder to prevent movement of the negative lead gas carrying pin in a proximal direction, the housing engages the second collar to prevent movement of the negative lead gas carrying pin in a distal direction, and the second collar of the negative lead gas carrying pin blocks access to the locking fingers through the first portion of the hollow internal channel.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 10, wherein the plug housing comprises a fiber-reinforced nylon material.

13. (Original) The connector of Claim 10, wherein the plurality of locking fingers comprise eight locking fingers evenly spaced around the hollow internal channel.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 10, wherein the pin is recessed within the second portion of the hollow internal channel.

16. (Original) The connector of Claim 10, wherein the negative gas carrying pin comprises a brass material.

17. (Currently Amended) A connector comprising:

a housing defining a hollow internal channel, the hollow internal channel comprising a first portion, a second portion, and a shoulder disposed between the first portion and the second portion;

at least one locking finger disposed within the hollow internal channel and disposed distally from the shoulder, the locking finger, the shoulder, and the housing forming a one-piece construction ~~and the shoulder being integral with the housing;~~ and

a pin defining a first collar with a shoulder disposed thereon and a second collar disposed proximally from the first collar,

wherein the second collar slidably blocks access to the locking finger through the first portion of the hollow internal channel, the pin is recessed within the second portion of the hollow internal channel, the locking finger engages the pin shoulder to prevent movement of the pin in a proximal direction, and the housing shoulder engages the second collar to prevent movement of the pin in a distal direction.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 17, wherein the housing comprises a fiber-reinforced nylon material.

20. (Original) The connector of Claim 17 further comprising eight locking fingers evenly spaced around the hollow internal channel.

21-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) A housing for use in connecting a pin in a plasma arc apparatus comprising:

a hollow internal channel comprising a shoulder; and

at least one locking finger disposed within the hollow internal channel and disposed distally from the shoulder, the shoulder, the locking finger, and the housing forming a one-piece construction, and the locking finger being integral with the housing

wherein the locking finger prevents movement of the pin in a proximal direction, and the shoulder prevents movement of the pin in a distal direction.

28. (Original) The housing of Claim 27 further comprising eight locking fingers evenly spaced around the hollow internal channel.

29-30. (Cancelled)

31. (Previously Presented) The connector of Claim 27, wherein the housing comprises a fiber-reinforced nylon material.

32-34. (Cancelled)

35. (Currently Amended) In a connector for making a connection in a plasma arc apparatus to provide fluid and electric power, the connector having a housing mounting a pin for conducting fluid and electric power, the improvement comprising:

a tamper resistant connection between the housing and the pin comprising:

a first collar;

a second collar disposed proximally from the first collar; and

a hollow internal channel within the housing to receive the pin, the hollow internal channel comprising a plurality of locking fingers and a shoulder disposed proximally from the locking fingers, the locking fingers, the shoulder, and the housing forming a one-piece construction ~~and shoulder being integral with the housing~~, wherein the locking fingers engage the first collar to secure the pin in a proximal direction and the housing shoulder engages the second collar to secure the pin in a distal direction.

36. (Original) The connector of Claim 35, wherein at least a portion of the pin proximal to the fingers is sized to closely conform to the hollow internal channel, to restrict access to the locking fingers.

37. (Original) The connector of Claim 35, wherein the locking fingers slope inwardly and distally, and wherein the shoulder faces proximally when disposed in the hollow internal channel to engage distal ends of the locking fingers and retain the pin against proximal movement.

38. (Original) The connector of Claim 35, wherein the hollow internal channel and the pin extend distally beyond the engagement between the locking fingers and the pin, to define a relatively long, restricted space between the pin and the hollow internal channel that restricts access to the fingers.

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently Amended) A connector for use in a plasma arc apparatus comprising:

a housing defining a hollow internal channel;

at least one locking finger disposed within the hollow internal channel, the locking finger and the housing forming a one-piece construction;
and

a pin disposed within the housing and comprising:

a first collar with a shoulder disposed thereon; and

a second collar disposed proximally from the first collar,

wherein the locking finger engages the shoulder and the second collar engages the housing such that the pin cannot be removed without destruction of the connector.

41-42. (Cancelled)